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DARK HORSE COMICS™

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RITE OF PASSAGE PART 1
IAN EDGINTON: WRITER
RICK LEONARDI: PENCILLER
DAN PANOSIAN: INKER
GREG WRIGHT: COLORIST

TIME COP:
A MAN OUT OF TIME PART 1
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CHRIS WARNER: INKER
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RENEGADE PART 1
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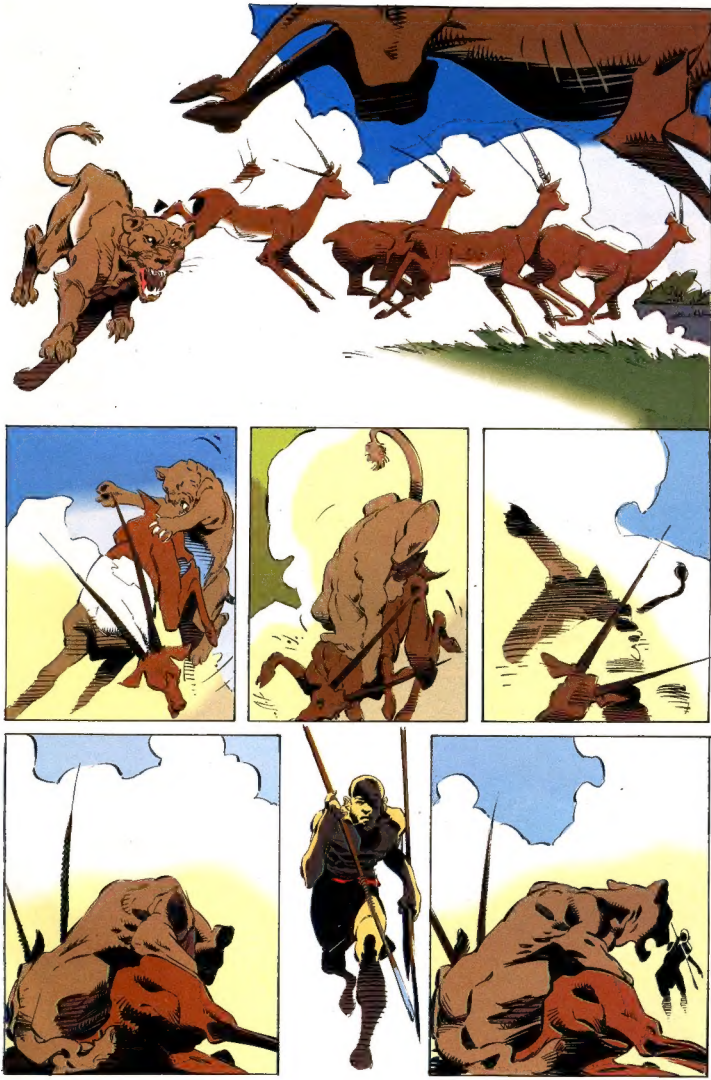
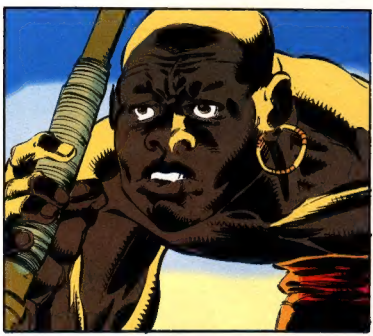




TIME COP
GRAND MOOR DIAMOND MINE, SOUTH AFRICA, 1933
WATCH YOUR HEAD THERE, MR. PACKER--WE'D HATE TO LOSE A PROSPECTIVE BUYER IN THIS HELL-HOLE.
WE'RE COMING UP ON SHAFT 46.
GROOVY.
OUT OF THE WAY, DAMN YOU--
I'M STILL CURIOUS WHY YOU SPECIFIED SHAFT 46, OUR CORP-ORATE RECORDS ARE SCRUPULOUSLY MAINTAINED --ONE OF YOUR SUBORDINATES COULD HAVE COMPLETED THE PHYSICAL INSPECTION--
I PREFER THE PERSONAL TOUCH
HAVE YOU GOT THE TIME?
2 95 BLACK BASTARDS WILL BE TAKING THEIR LUNCH SOON, I IMAGINE--
NOT TODAY THEY WON'T--
MY LORD--
BLASTED KAFIRS--
BACK TO WORK, BEFORE I--
SWEET JESUS AND PETER--IT'S A DIAMOND--
BIGGEST DAMN STONE I'VE EVER SEEN--

A MAN OUT OF TIME PART 1

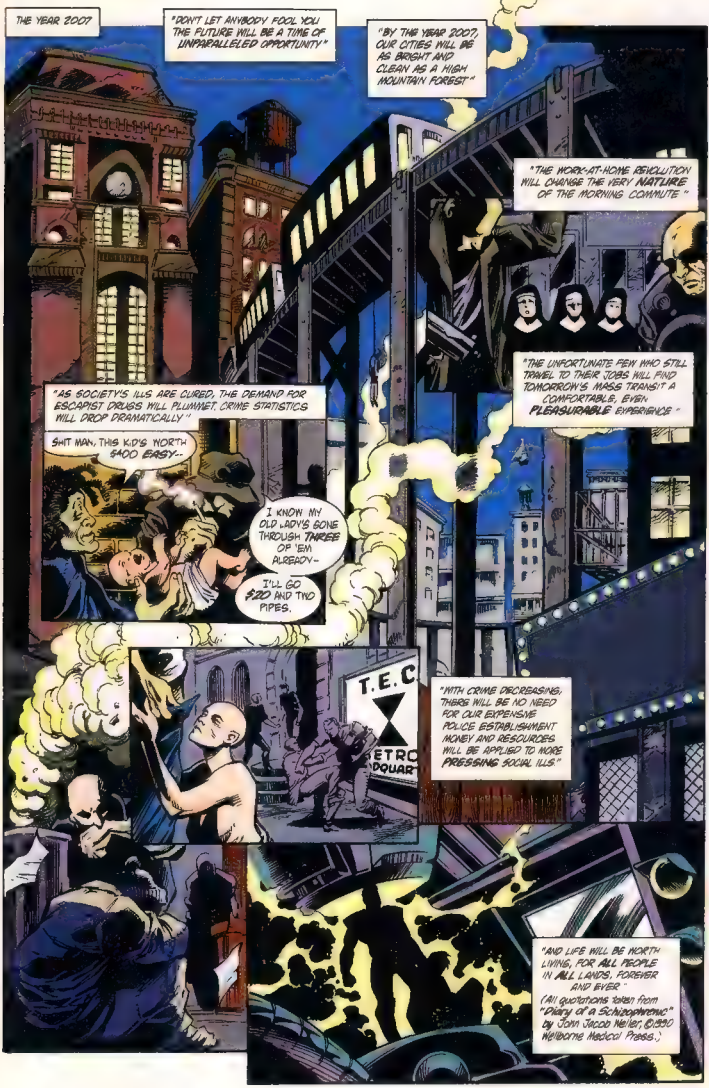
NOT TO MENTION THE LAST--
BLAM
I SUPPOSE A MOMENT OF SILENCE WOULD BE IN ORDER TO COMMEMORATE MR. MACNEE'S PASSING--
--THAT'S ENOUGH. NOW BE GOOD BOYS AND EXCAVATE THE REST OF MY PRIZE.
FASTER, DAMN IT--
HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME--
GIVE IT TO ME--I WANT TO TOUCH IT--
WEALTH--POWER--I WANT TO KNOW HOW IT FEELS--
ZZZKKK--
--NO--NOT YET--

:MMNGHH!:
JOHN ADAM PACKER--YOU'RE UNDER ARREST--
PAPAPPAP
UHMPH!
AND YOU'RE UNDER 300 FEET OF SOLID ROCK, COP--NO WITNESSES AND NO WAY OUT
YOU IDIOT--THAT VEST COST ME 1400 BUCKS!
DIDN'T THINK YOU'D GO DOWN THAT EASY--
--BUT I LEARNED TWO THINGS IN BOY SCOUTS--1) CAMPING SUCKS, AND 2)--
--BE PREPARED.
YOU WOULDN'T KNOW A HEART BALOPSE FROM A PARKING TICKET--
I'VE ALREADY GOT YOU ON A DOZEN T.E.C. STATUTES--DON'T ADD "PISSED ME OFF!" TO THE LIST--
SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIEND--
I'M TAKEUSH TALKING.

A RAMCO™ PERSONAL PROTECTION HUNTER/KILLER--
ERRR
CUTE, PUNK-- SIMPLE POSSESSION ADDS A MANDATORY TEN YEARS TO YOUR SENTENCE--
YOU'RE GETTING IN OVER YOUR HEAD--
I WAS "IN" THE MOMENT I SAT IN THE POD--NOTHING'S GOING TO STOP ME FROM TAKING WHAT'S MINE.
THE KILLER'S PROGRAMMED TO KICK ASS UNTIL I TELL IT TO STOP--
STAY CLEAR--
THE WORLD'S GONE MAD--
GRRR
UGHHH
WHUMP
TOOK ME YEARS TO PINPOINT THE DATE AND TIME OF THE FIND--
MOST OF THE MINE'S FILES WERE LOST IN A FIRE-- BUT I FINALLY FOUND WHAT I NEEDED--
--MAYBE THEY'LL COME VISIT YOU IN JAIL--
HEHEHE-- I'M SURE YOUR PARENTS WILL BE PROUD--

SCREEEEEE
PIECE OF JUNK
YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE INTO A DIFFERENT LINE OF WORK--
KISS IT GOODBYE, YOU T.E.C BAG--
PLOOM!
NO!
NO-- WAIT!
THANKS, PAL--
I OWE YOU ONE.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SPENT THE EXTRA $200 FOR THE REINFORCED MODEL--
WAIT ON THIS, WISE-GUY--
QUICKLY! IT'S COMING DOWN!
WHACK!

NH-WHO ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU FROM?
THE "WHO" PART IS EASY --NAME'S WALKER. THE "WHERE" IS A LITTLE TOUGHER--
LET'S JUST SAY-- CINCINNATI.
ALL THIS FOR A DAMN ROCK.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, KID?
JOSEPH. JOSEPH M'BOTO
WELL, JOE, IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE--
HERE--GRAB YOURSELF A COUPLE BEERS ON THE WAY BACK TO THE--
CRRAAKK!
--DAMN--
CRUMMPH!
I'LL DO MORE THAN THAT, MY FRIEND--
MUCH MORE--


THE YEAR 2007
"DON'T LET ANYBODY FOOL YOU. THE FUTURE WILL BE A TIME OF UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY."
"BY THE YEAR 2007, OUR CITIES WILL BE AS BRIGHT AND CLEAN AS A HIGH MOUNTAIN FOREST."
"THE WORK-AT-HOME REVOLUTION WILL CHANGE THE VERY NATURE OF THE MORNING COMMUTE."
"THE UNFORTUNATE FEW WHO STILL TRAVEL TO THEIR JOBS WILL FIND TOMORROW'S MASS TRANSIT A COMFORTABLE, EVEN PLEASURABLE EXPERIENCE."
"AS SOCIETY'S ILLS ARE CURED, THE DEMAND FOR ESCAPIST DRUGS WILL PLUMMET. CRIME STATISTICS WILL DROP DRAMATICALLY."
SHIT MAN, THIS KID'S WORTH $400 EASY--
I KNOW MY OLD LADY'S GONE THROUGH THREE OF 'EM ALREADY--
I'LL GO $220 AND TWO PIPES.
T.E.C
"WITH CRIME DECREASING, THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR OUR EXPENSIVE POLICE ESTABLISHMENT. MONEY AND RESOURCES WILL BE APPLIED TO MORE PRESSING SOCIAL ILLS."
"AND LIFE WILL BE WORTH LIVING, FOR ALL PEOPLE IN ALL LANDS, FOREVER AND EVER."
(All quotations taken from "Diary of a Schizophrenic" by Jonn Jacob Heller, ©1990 Hellborne Medicci Press.)

TAKE THIS WASTE OF SKIN DOWNSTAIRS AND BOOK 'M
JESUS, WALKER--WHAT HAPPENED OUT THERE?
WHAT ALWAYS HAPPENS? I KICKED ASS--PULLED IN THE PSEOR WITH A RECORD MINIMUM OF CHRONAL DISPLACEMENT--
THE HELL YOU DID --THE BIG BOARD'S REGISTERING OFF THE SCALE! WE'VE GOT BLISTERS POPPING UP IN EVERY SECTOR!
I WANT A--DAMN IT, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
I THINK I BROKE MY HAND ON THAT METAL BASTARD'S ME--
OH NO.
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
I LEFT PACKER'S ERECTOR SET UNDER HALF A MOUNTAIN OF GRANITE --FIGURED THAT WOULD BE THE END OF IT--
"--BUT MAYBE IT'S NOT DEAD YET--"
NEXT ISSUE: RETURN TRIP

RENEGADE

HE WALKED INTO THE FESTIVAL GROUND AS THOUGH HE OWNED THE PLACE
PROBABLY THOUGHT HE DID.
EVENING FOLKS
I HOPE I'M NOT INTER-RUPTING

BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND VINCE GIARRANO

TOM ORZECHOWSKI
LETTERER

GREGORY WRIGHT
COLORIST

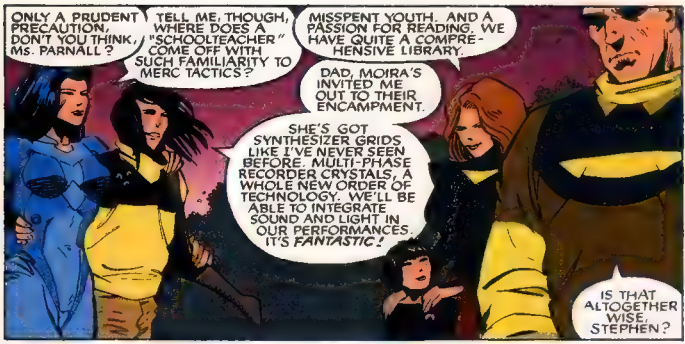
DIANA SCHUTZ AND JERRY PROSSER
EDITORS

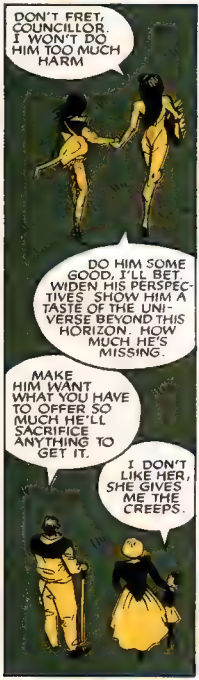
AS YOU CAN SEE, WE'RE HAVING A PARTY.
YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN US-- WE DON'T TURN AWAY EVEN UNINVITED GUESTS-- BUT THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOUR WEAPONS. THIS IS A PEACEABLE SOCIETY.
WE KNOW THAT, MA'AM. FULL WELL.
I'M CALEB DESCHANEL. THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, FREDERIKA.
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE IN AUTHORITY HERE, I GUESS I'M IT.
FOUNDERS' DAY CENTENNIAL GALA
AND I JUST WANT TO ASSURE YOU AND ALL PRESENT THAT YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT YOU.
HOW COMFORTING.
ASH, WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?
DADDY, WHAT DO THEY WANT?
THAT'S WHAT I'M ABOUT TO FIND OUT, FREDDIE.
A PLEASURE, SIR.
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MY FIELD-FIRST-- ESSENTIALLY MY EXECUTIVE OFFICER-- MOIRA DELGADO.
AND I, SIR, AM JAVIER MILAN...
...COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE DESCARTES INDIGENOUS SELF-DEFENSE FORCES.
I WASN'T AWARE DESCARTES HAD AN INDIGENOUS SELF-DEFENSE FORCE, OR EVEN A NEED FOR ONE
THAT'S THE NATURE OF A GOOD BUSINESS, ISN'T IT-- TO IDENTIFY A CONSUMER'S NEEDS AND PROVIDE FOR THEM?
WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT? WANT IT OR NOT?
I'M SURE THE COMMANDER'S BEEN IN TRANSIT A LONG TIME. THIS IS A PARTY, AFTER ALL, CALEB, AND I DID INVITE HIM TO ENJOY IT
COMMANDER, WOULD YOU CARE TO DANCE?

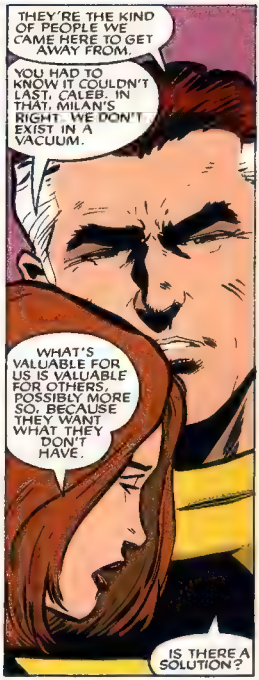
VERY NICELY PLAYED. THAT HAD THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING A... DELICATE SITUATION.
IT IS ALREADY. I JUST DON'T WANT THINGS GETTING OUT OF HAND.
THAT'S A FEELING WE BOTH SHARE, Ms. ...?
I'M ASH. ASH PARNALL. I TEACH SCHOOL. IF I MAY ASK, COMMANDER MILAN, WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?
REAL NICE PLACE YOU HAVE HERE
WE'D LIKE TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.
NO REASON WHY YOU CAN'T.
PROBLEM IS, WHILE YOUR PLANET'S AWESOME IN POTENTIAL, IT'S PRACTICALLY WEIGHTLESS IN EXPLOITATION.
YOUR PROFITABILITY RATING'S NEAR OFF THE CHARTS, BUT ALL YOUR ASSETS ARE STILL IN THE GROUND
WE DO WELL ENOUGH
SELFISH ATTITUDE, DON'T YOU THINK, WHEN THERE'S A BIG, WIDE UNIVERSE OUT THERE CRYING FOR RAW MATERIALS? RESOURCES THAT AREN'T EXPLOITED ARE WASTED
ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE ARE FORTUNES TO BE MADE IN THE PROCESS.
WITHOUT BEING FLIP, WHY DON'T YOU FIND YOUR OWN PLANET? WHY PICK ON US?
THIS ISN'T PERSONAL, Ms. PARNALL STRICTLY BUSINESS. THE FACT IS, YOU PEOPLE ARE AS INTEGRAL A PART OF THE PACKAGE AS THE MINERALS THEMSELVES

THINGS ARE IN BALANCE AS THEY ARE, MILAN. EVEN IF WE WANTED TO EXPORT, OUR POPULATION BASE ISN'T SUFFICIENT TO PRODUCE ENOUGH TO MAKE IT WORTH OUR WHILE. AND IT WON'T BE FOR GENERATIONS
YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF VIABLE LAND HERE. YOU COULD INCREASE THE POPULATION BY A FACTOR OF A HUNDRED--IMPORT A SUFFICIENT LABOR POOL TO SUSTAIN ANY LEVEL OF PRODUCTION--WITHOUT SHOWING ANY STRAIN.
FACT IS, ASH, DESCARTES IS A VALUABLE PROPERTY. DREAMS NOTWITHSTANDING. YOU DON'T LIVE IN A VACUUM. SOMETHING LIKE THIS WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN, SOONER OR LATER.
HELL, YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE WERE HERE UNTIL MOIRA AND I WALKED IN YOUR FRONT DOOR NOBODY CAN EXIST ON THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS, BECAUSE THERE AIN'T NO SUCH ANIMAL
THE QUESTION IS, NOW THAT DAY HAS COME, DO YOU WANT IT DIRTY OR CLEAN? THE ONE WAY, EVERYBODY SUFFERS. THE OTHER, YOU AND YOURS COME OUT OF THIS WITH FAIR COMPENSATION
NOT THAT WE HAVE ANY ALTERNATIVE
THERE ARE ALWAYS ALTERNATIVES. YOU JUST HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF IF THEY'RE WORTH THE PRICE
LAAGER'S SECURE, COMMANDER. *RANSOME'S* ON STATION. SITUATION NOMINAL, ON THE SURFACE AND IN SPACE.
"RANSOME"?
OUR MOTHER SHIP, IN LOW ORBIT.
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, LADIES, I'LL MINGLE WITH SOME OF THE OTHER FOLKS
THAT BOY, DESCHANEL'S SON--*STEPHEN*, IS IT?-- HE LOOKS AS GOOD AS HE PLAYS.
I THINK I'LL INTRODUCE MYSELF
BE GENTLE, MOIRA. WE'RE HERE TO MAKE FRIENDS

KCHAK!
THAT'S THE LADY'S GUN.
IT IS, INDEED.
IT LOOKS NASTY.
LOOKS AREN'T DECEIVING.
ARE WE BEING INVADED, ASH?
MORE ALONG THE LINES, HON, OF A HOSTILE TAKEOVER.
THE MAN SAYS THEY'RE BASED OUT OF GOTH. THAT'S FORTY-THREE LIGHTS DOWN THE ARM, ASH, IN ANOTHER ADMIN SECTOR, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
WHATEVER COULD BE POSSESSING THEM TO PUSH OUT IN THIS DIRECTION? AND SO FAR?
THE PROFIT, PRESUMABLY, JUSTIFIES THE INVESTMENT.
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO?
THIS ISN'T AN ISOLATED OCCURRENCE, EITHER. THEY'RE WORKING TO A VERY PRECISE SCENARIO.
DOES THAT MEAN THEY'VE DONE IT BEFORE?
WITHOUT A DOUBT.
EVEN IF WE COULD MAKE MILAN AND HIS TEAM SOMEHOW DISAPPEAR, THERE'S STILL THE PROBLEM OF WHOEVER SENT THEM.
OUR NEXT VISITORS WON'T BE ANYWHERE NEAR SO NICE.
HOW MANY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE?
STANDARD CADRE NUMBERS A BAKER'S DOZEN. THEY AREN'T THE REAL THREAT.
IT'S THEIR MOTHER SHIP. SEVENTY-MINUTE ORBIT, ECCENTRIC ENOUGH TO TAKE IT OVER ALL THE MAJOR COMMUNITIES. WEAPONS TARGETED ON EACH.
ANYTHING GETS NASTY: BANG, WE'RE DEAD.

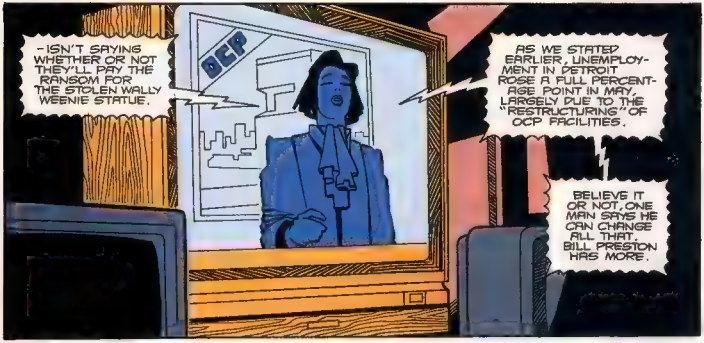

ONLY A PRUDENT PRECAUTION, DON'T YOU THINK, MS. PARNALL?
TELL ME, THOUGH, WHERE DOES A "SCHOOLTEACHER" COME OFF WITH SUCH FAMILIARITY TO MERC TACTICS?
MISSPENT YOUTH. AND A PASSION FOR READING. WE HAVE QUITE A COMPREHENSIVE LIBRARY.
DAD, MOIRA'S INVITED ME OUT TO THEIR ENCAMPMENT.
SHE'S GOT SYNTHESIZER GRIDS LIKE I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE. MULTI-PHASE RECORDER CRYSTALS, A WHOLE NEW ORDER OF TECHNOLOGY. WE'LL BE ABLE TO INTEGRATE SOUND AND LIGHT IN OUR PERFORMANCES. IT'S FANTASTIC!
IS THAT ALTOGETHER WISE, STEPHEN?

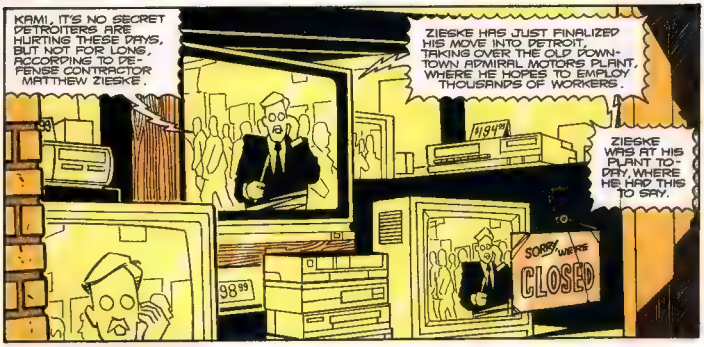

DON'T FRET, COUNCILLOR. I WON'T DO HIM TOO MUCH HARM
DO HIM SOME GOOD, I'LL BET. WIDEN HIS PERSPECTIVES. SHOW HIM A TASTE OF THE UNIVERSE BEYOND THIS HORIZON. HOW MUCH HE'S MISSING.
MAKE HIM WANT WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER SO MUCH HE'LL SACRIFICE ANYTHING TO GET IT.
I DON'T LIKE HER, SHE GIVES ME THE CREEPS.

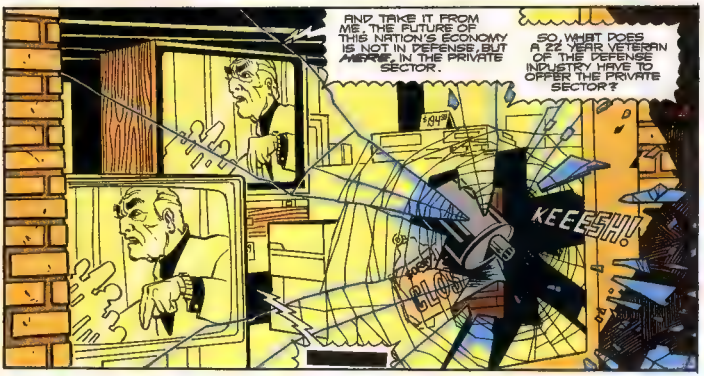

THEY'RE THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE CAME HERE TO GET AWAY FROM.
YOU HAD TO KNOW IT COULDN'T LAST, CALEB. IN THAT, MILAN'S RIGHT. WE DON'T EXIST IN A VACUUM.
WHAT'S VALUABLE FOR US IS VALUABLE FOR OTHERS, POSSIBLY MORE SO, BECAUSE THEY WANT WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE.
IS THERE A SOLUTION?

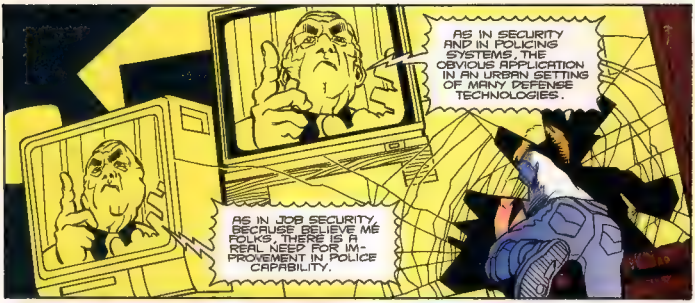
ALL SORTS. YOU CAN BEND IN THE WIND WHAT'S THE OLD PHRASE-- "TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN"
THAT'LL MEAN THE END OF EVERYTHING WE'VE WORKED FOR
THAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING
EVEN IF THIS THREAT IS REMOVED, YOU HAVE TO ASSUME OTHERS WILL FOLLOW. YOU HAVE TO BE PREPARED
A DIFFERENT KIND OF SACRIFICE THAN THE ONE MILAN OFFERS, BUT NO LESS PAINFUL

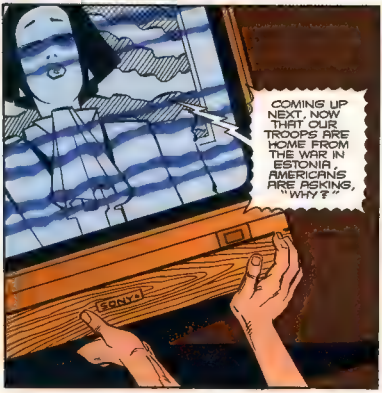
AT LEAST WE'LL BE WORKING FOR OURSELVES, DEFENDING OUR HOMES AND OUR WAY OF LIFE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING?
I WANT MY SON BACK. I WANT MY WORLD SAFE.
I'D GO, MYSELF, IF I WAS ABLE.
IT WON'T END HERE. YOU YOURSELF SAID IT, DEALING WITH THEM IS IRRELEVANT IF IT LEAVES IN PLAY THOSE WHO SENT THEM
I KNOW.
BUT THERE'S NO ONE ELSE
ALL RIGHT, THEN. I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.
NO WEAPONS?
GRACIOUS, NO! WHY ASK FOR TROUBLE?
IT'S FUNNY, I DON'T WANT TO SAY "GOOD-BYE."
EVERYBODY DOES, SOONER OR LATER.
I'M SORRY
ME, TOO
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHERE ARE YOU GOING, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
SOMETHING ONLY I CAN.
BUT YOU'LL BE OKAY, RIGHT? YOU'LL BE BACK!
I'LL BE FINE MEANWHILE, YOU LOOK AFTER THINGS AT MY PLACE, WILL YOU DO THAT FOR ME?
ASH, I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT CAN YOU DO? WHAT CAN YOU SAY? WHY SHOULD THEY LISTEN?
NOT TO WORRY, HON
I'LL FIND A WAY.
TO BE CONCLUDED

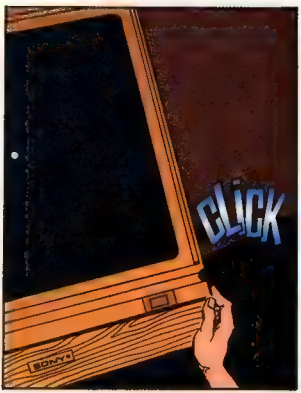

- ISN'T SAYING WHETHER OR NOT THEY'LL PAY THE RANSOM FOR THE STOLEN WALLY WEENIE STATUE.
OCP
AS WE STATED EARLIER, UNEMPLOYMENT IN DETROIT ROSE A FULL PERCENTAGE POINT IN MAY, LARGELY DUE TO THE "RESTRUCTURING" OF OCP FACILITIES.
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, ONE MAN SAYS HE CAN CHANGE ALL THAT. BILL PRESTON HAS MORE.

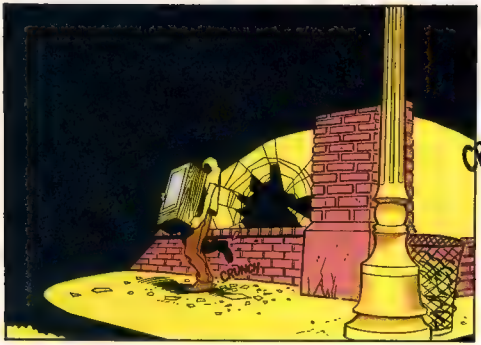

KAMI, IT'S NO SECRET DETROITERS ARE HURTING THESE DAYS, BUT NOT FOR LONG, ACCORDING TO DEFENSE CONTRACTOR MATTHEW ZIESKE.
ZIESKE HAS JUST FINALIZED HIS MOVE INTO DETROIT, TAKING OVER THE OLD DOWNTOWN ADMIRAL MOTORS PLANT, WHERE HE HOPES TO EMPLOY THOUSANDS OF WORKERS.
ZIESKE WAS AT HIS PLANT TODAY, WHERE HE HAD THIS TO SAY.
SORRY, WE'RE CLOSED
98.99

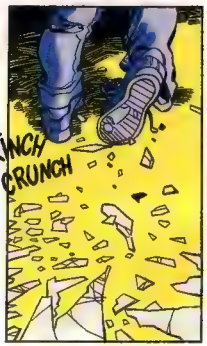

AND TAKE IT FROM ME, THE FUTURE OF THIS NATION'S ECONOMY IS NOT IN DEFENSE, BUT AMERME, IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.
SO, WHAT DOES A 22 YEAR VETERAN OF THE DEFENSE INDUSTRY HAVE TO OFFER THE PRIVATE SECTOR?
KEEESH!
GLOP

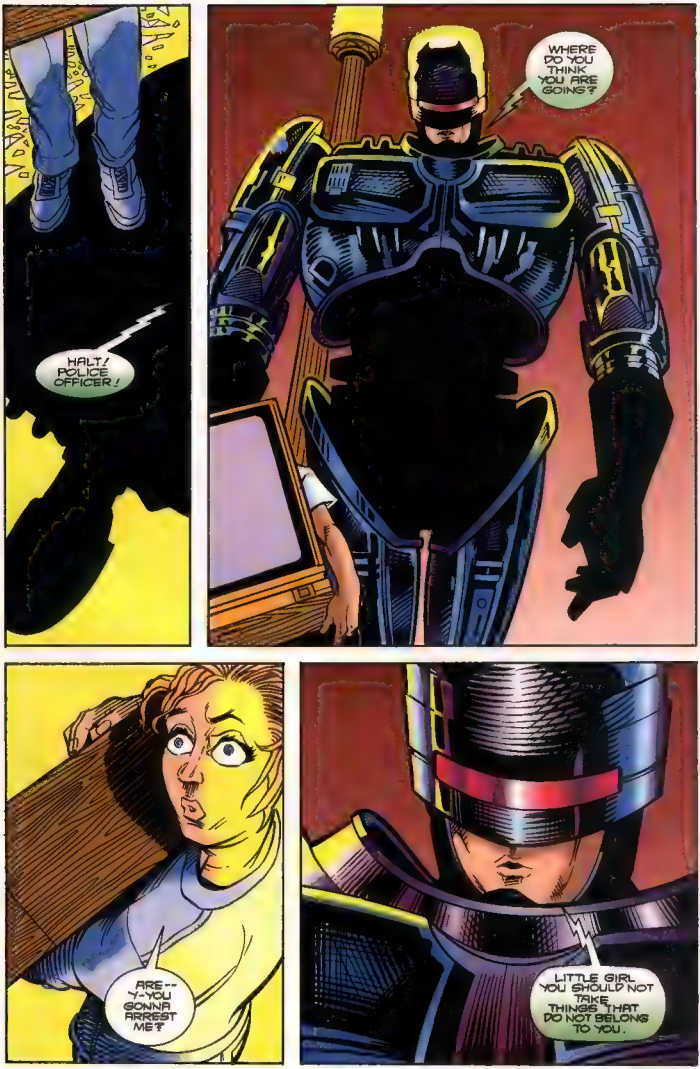

AS IN SECURITY AND IN POLICING SYSTEMS, THE OBVIOUS APPLICATION IN AN URBAN SETTING OF MANY DEFENSE TECHNOLOGIES.
AS IN JOB SECURITY, BECAUSE BELIEVE ME FOLKS, THERE IS A REAL NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN POLICE CAPABILITY.


COMING UP NEXT, NOW THAT OUR TROOPS ARE HOME FROM THE WAR IN ESTONIA, AMERICANS ARE ASKING, "WHY?"
SONY

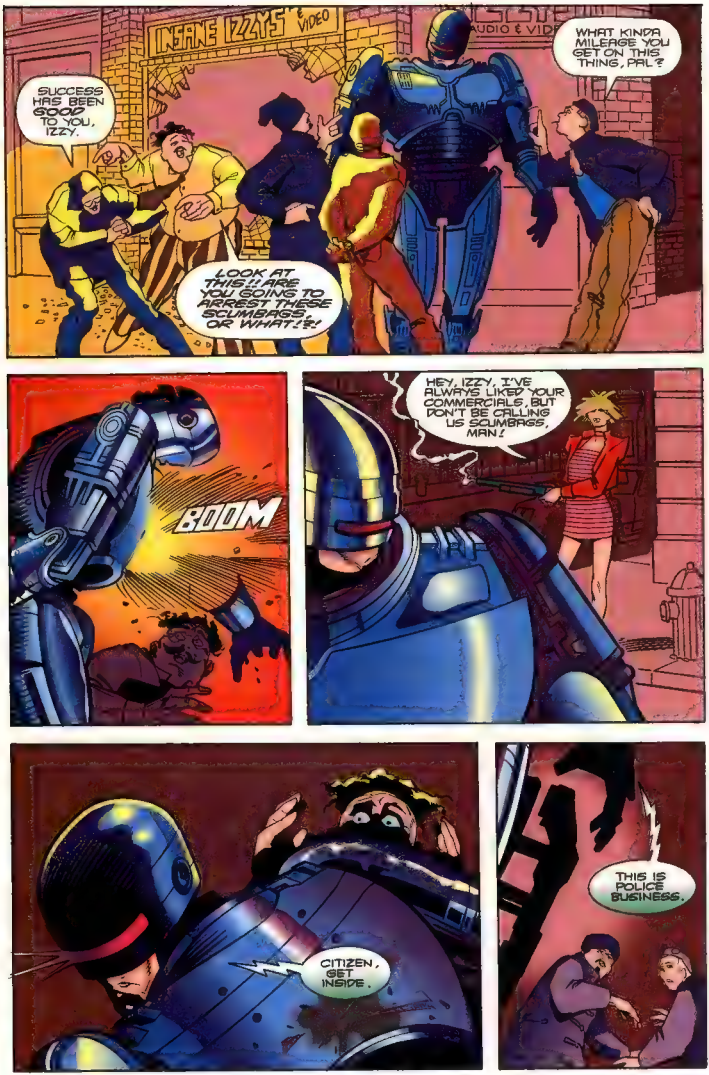

CLICK
SONY


CRUNCH


CRUNCH
CRUNCH


HALT! POLICE OFFICER!
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE GOING?
ARE-- Y-YOU GONNA ARREST ME?
LITTLE GIRL YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE THINGS THAT DO NOT BELONG TO YOU.

YEAH, MY MOM TOLD ME THAT, TOO.
CRASH!!
INSANE IZZY'S AUDIO & VIDEO
HEY, ROBO-COP, I FIGGERED WE WAS TOO SMALL TIME FOR YOU.
YEAH, GO OUT AND FIND YOURSELF A MURDERER OR SOMETHING.
THERE THEY ARE, OFFICER, THERE THEY ARE, ARREST THEM.
IT'S THE THIRD TIME THIS MONTH.
WOW, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S INSANE IZZY, IN THE FLESH!
IN A LOT OF FLESH, YOU MEAN.


INSANE IZZY'S VIDEO
SUCCESS HAS BEEN GOOD TO YOU, IZZY.
WHAT KINDA MILEAGE YOU GET ON THIS THING, PAL?
LOOK AT THIS!! ARE YOU GOING TO ARREST THESE SCUMBAGS, OR WHAT!?!
BOOM
HEY, IZZY, I'VE ALWAYS LIKED YOUR COMMERCIALS, BUT DON'T BE CALLING US SCUMBAGS, MAN!
CITIZEN, GET INSIDE.
THIS IS POLICE BUSINESS.

HEY, MAN, THAT GUN IS B16!!
HE AIN'T GONNA SHOOT ANYBODY. JUST DON'T LET HIM CATCH YOU.
AT THE RATE HE'S GOIN', THAT SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD. HA HA HA.
CLONK CLONK
DET.
CENTRAL, THIS IS ROBOCOP.
AM IN PURSUIT OF ROBBERY SUSPECTS DOWN BARRY SANDERS BOULEVARD TOWARD LOWELL. SUSPECTS ARE ON FOOT, AND ARMED.
NO BACK-UP NECESSARY, OVER.
BEEP BEEP

KA-RONK
YOW!!
WELL, IZZY, I CAN'T SAY IT HASN'T BEEN FUN, 'CAUSE IT HAS.
CHA CHUNK
BUT YOU NEVER SHOULDA CALLED THE COPS ON US!

The Finish Line

Hello? Hi, it's John! Just wanted to make this expensive long distance call to let you know that I'm doing fine with my new job up here in Oregon. Remember, the comic-book job? With Dark Horse? Yeah, it's fun. No, no, I don't draw any. Um, what do I do? I'm an editor. What's that, you say? You don't read comic books? Lots of people still don't — they don't know what they're missing.You should take a peek.

Matter of fact, I'm editing a number of translated Japanese comics (manga) over here; did you know in Japan the majority of people read comics? They're not stereotyped as children's literature, either. They have business comics, golf comics, anything you'd imagine... What? No, I don't speak a word of Japanese — and even if I did, I couldn't translate all of the comics we're doing! Dark Horse is working with Studio Proteus, a collection of excellent translators and artists who specialize in bringing manga to these shores... Since the Japanese read comics right to left we reverse or 'flop' the pages, and then add translated lettering and sound effects.

There's a lot to check out! There's *Venus Wars II*, a futuristic political thriller by animation great Yoshikazu Yasuhiko; *Caravan Kidd*, an adventure/comedy by the creator of the popular *Outlanders* series, Johji Manabe; and fan favorite Masamune Shirow's mystical *Orion* will knock your socks off with its beautifully realized art and fantastic setting — that's right, they'll be lying on the floor next to your feet. Studio Proteus translator and Big Chief Toren Smith has been keeping busy tracking down Shirow's wide-ranging references, from Tantric Buddhism to obscure pseudo-Sanskrit lettering.

And we've got a lot more on the way, too! There's the *Dirty Pair*, two interstellar troubleshooters who always seem to make things worse rather than better; Hisashi Sakaguchi's *Version*, with it's gorgeous natural settings and cutting edge biotechnology should be a sleeper hit; and I'm really looking forward to more Shirow material, including his *Intron Depot* collection, which should be out right about now.

Well, I'd be happy to chew your ear off about this stuff — Huh? You gotta go? Well, hope the kids are doing well, and the dog's mange has cleared up.

Next time I won't call collect.

John Weeks

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Vampirella's Summer Nights

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